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## ZOOLOGY.

**Habits of Limpets.**—It has long been known that the common limpet (*Patella vulgata*) settles down on some eligible spot (its “scar”) between tide-marks, and makes a home, to which it returns after having been out to feed. This locality-sense has been supposed to be independent of smell, sight and touch, so far as the head tentacles are concerned. Mr. Lloyd Morgan, however, has shown (*Nature*, Dec. 6, 1894) that the head tentacles are the sense-organs concerned with this “homing” power. Later observations made by J. R. A. Davis, at the Scottish Marine Section, confirm Mr. Morgan’s conclusions, to some extent, but Mr. Davis is inclined to think that the mantle tentacles may help in the homing.

Mr. Davis notes also that this homing faculty is not confined to *Patella*, but is also possessed by *Helcion pellucidum*. The object of this habit seems to be protection from the assaults of the incoming or outgoing tide. (*Nature*, March, 1895).

**Life-History of the Lobster.**—With a view to the artificial culture of the Lobster, Mr. Samuel Garman has undertaken to study the life-history of this animal, and has published the following notes on their breeding habits:

1. The female lobster lays her eggs but once in two years.

The normal time of deposition is when the water has attained its summer temperature, varying with seasons and places; the period extends from about the middle of June to the middle of September.

3. The eggs do not hatch until the following summer, that is, for a year. The time of hatching varies also with the temperature, and extends from the middle of May to the last of August.

**The Gas in the Swim-bladder of Deep-Sea Fishes.**—During the last scientific voyage of the yacht *Princess Alice*, commanded by Prince Monaco, M. Jules Richard had an opportunity of analyzing the gas in the swim-bladder of several species of deep-sea fishes. Serranus, from a depth of 60 meters, and congers, taken from a depth of 175 meters off the bank of the Gorringe, showed more than 80 per cent. of oxygen. The rest of the gas was nitrogen with traces of CO<sub>2</sub>. The proportion of oxygen was such that it was easy to perform the well known experiment of lighting a candle by holding one in the

gas, having previously lighted and extinguished it, leaving only a spark to start combustion. *Simenchelys parasiticus*, taken in a bow-net from 1674 meters' depth in the neighborhood of Corogne, showed 78 per cent. oxygen, that is to say, less than Serranus from 60 meters' depth. The law stated by Biot, that the proportion of oxygen increases with the depth is in default. Some other influences must be taken into account. (Revue Scientifique, April, 1895).

**A New Locality for *Abastor erythrogrammus*.**—I recently saw excavated from a clay bank on the Pamunkey River, Virginia, two specimens of the *Abastor erythrogrammus*. This is very far north of the most northern locality known in the east, which is South Carolina, although it has been found in the Austoriparian area in Southern Illinois. The locality mentioned is outside of that area and is in the Carolinian district. That the species is a burrower allied to *Carpophiops* is attested not only by its structure but by its habits. According to Mr. A. E. Brown, it has been dug from mounds in Florida at a considerable distance below the surface by Mr. C. B. Moore.

E. D. COPE.

**The Cold-Storage Warehouse Cat.**—A story has been going the rounds of newspapers, both west and east, to the effect that a new breed of cats has been produced in the cold-storage warehouses of Pittsburg. In some of the papers, reference was made to a new species of rat with the bodies clothed with remarkably long thick fur, with even the tails covered with a thick growth of hair. The rats had adapted themselves to a low temperature, and the cats were the result of breeding from artificial selection in order to obtain a cat to prey on the new rat. According to the story, after several failures, a brood of seven kittens, the progeny of a mother possessing unusually thick fur, was raised in the rooms of the storage company, and developed into sturdy, thick-furred cats, with shortened tails, and "feelers" five or six inches in length. This latter character was said to be probably due to their environment, since they must necessarily live in semi-darkness. Another peculiarity of the new cat is its inability to live in an ordinary temperature. When removed from the warehouse to the open air, especially in summer time, it will die of convulsions in a few hours.

This story was reprinted in England in some excellent scientific journals, which showed a great lack of caution in appropriating anything supposed to be new in science from a newspaper. It illustrates once more the English tendency to neglect the good and discover the

bad in American affairs. Mrs. Alice Bodington, however, redeemed the reputation of her countrymen by writing to the Secretary of the Cold Storage Co., to ascertain the facts in the case. She received the following reply :

"While there is some foundation for the newspaper article, it is somewhat exaggerated. Our cold storage house is separated into rooms of various sizes, varying from 10° to 40° above zero.

"About a year ago we discovered mice in one of the rooms of the cold storage house. We removed one of the cats from the general warehouse to the room referred to in the cold storage house. While there, she had a litter of several kittens. Four of these were transferred into one of the general warehouses, leaving three in the cold storage house. After the kittens were old enough to take care of themselves, we put the old cat back into the house we had taken her from. The change of climate or temperature seemed to affect her almost immediately. She got very weak and languid. We placed her again in the cold storage room, when she immediately revived.

"While the feelers of the cats in the cold storage room are of the usual length, the fur is thick and the cats are larger, stronger and healthier than the cats in any of the other warehouses."

Thus the only result of the change of environment was the usual one which ensues on the advent of winter in extratropical latitudes generally. It is interesting as showing that the effect is really produced by the low temperature, and is not a survival through natural selection of a chance variation, as a certain school of evolutionists would have us believe.

**A New Harvest Mouse from Florida.**—In a paper entitled "Contributions to the Mammalogy of Florida," published in the Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, in 1894, I had the pleasure of recording the first capture of a *Reithrodontomys* in Florida.

This specimen seemed to indicate good sub-specific characters in comparison with *R. humilis* of more northern latitudes, but owing to its apparent immaturity, I decided to postpone a description until other specimens were taken.

Subsequently, Mr. F. M. Chapman recorded, in the Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, of 1894, the taking of another specimen. The apparent rarity is confirmed by the experience of my friend Mr. Outram Bangs, who, in a list of about five hundred specimens of rodents taken by him in Florida the present winter (1894-5),

does not enumerate a single specimen of the Harvest Mouse. I have just received a second specimen from Mr. Dickinson, who sent me the first one, and, as this is an adult in perfect condition and fully confirms the peculiar characters of number one, it may form the type of the following diagnosis:

*Reithrodontomys humilis dickinsoni*.<sup>1</sup> Type ad. ♀, No. 2240, col. of S. N. Rhoads. Col. by W. S. Dickinson, at Willow Oak, Pasco Co., Florida, Apr. 6th, 1895.

Description: Size considerably smaller than *R. humilis*. Color above, uniform plumbeous gray, almost sooty, slightly darker along middle of back and rump, and a faint wash of light brown on sides. Tail above like back; below, grayish, like feet and under parts. Skull as in *humilis*, but distinctly smaller.

Measurements: Total length, 118; tail vertebræ, 56; hind foot, 15. Skull, total length, 18.3; basilar length, 13.6; length of nasals, 6.1; interorbital constriction, 3.1; zygomatic expansion, 9.6; length of mandible, 10; width of mandible, 4.7 mm.

This race of the common eastern Harvest Mouse conforms to the peculiarities of the Floridian as contrasted with the Carolinian environment in the same way that its allies and neighbors of the genera *Sigmodon* and *Peromyscus* have done, viz., in the diminution of brown and rusty colors and the acquirement of a more or less darkened shade of gray.

—SAMUEL N. RHOADS.

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## EMBRYOLOGY.<sup>1</sup>

**Grafting Amphibia.**—Professor G. Born has published a preliminary notice<sup>2</sup> of some novel experiments made upon the young tadpoles of various amphibia.

In studying regenerative processes in young tadpoles he observed that when a tadpole was cut into two pieces, the pieces might unite

<sup>1</sup> Named for Mr. W. S. Dickinson of Tarpon Springs, Fla. in recognition of of his valuable services in the collecting of Florida mammals.

<sup>1</sup> Edited by E. A. Andrews, Baltimore, Md., to whom abstracts, reviews and preliminary notes may be sent.

<sup>2</sup> Jahresbericht d. Schlesischen Gesell. f. nat. Cultur Sitz., June 8, 1894.